

MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT CHILD SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Straight talk with children works best when discussing the serious topic of personal safety with your children. Do not rely completely on puppets, coloring books, gimmicks, and cartoon characters.
- Instill in your children a sense of self-worth and dignity at every opportunity.
- Teach your children basic sex education, (i.e., the areas of the body that are covered by a bathing suit are private).
- Establish that inappropriate touches are against the law. This gives your child confidence to assert themselves with those who try to abuse them.
- Allow children to express affection on their terms. Do not instruct them to give kisses or hugs to people they do not know well.
- Stress that there should be no secrets from you, especially those involving another adult.
- Explain the importance of reporting abuse or attempted abuse to or another **“Trusted Adult.”** This would also apply to inappropriate touching.
- Do not rely entirely on **“The Buddy System.”** In many documented cases, sisters, brothers, and playmates have been victims of terrible crimes when together.
- Make it a priority to get to know your children’s friends and their families.
- Encourage involvement in extracurricular activities. Children with many interests are less likely to experiment with drugs or other negative influences.
- Teach your children to respect, admire, and celebrate the differences in people.
- Ask questions about what your children are doing, where they are going, and whom they will be with.
- **“Set Times”** to be home or check in. Have a back-up plan.
- A child’s room should not be considered their private, personal domain where parents are not allowed to check them.
- Monitor computer and Internet usage, daily, if possible.
- Above all, encourage your children to recognize, trust, and follow their instincts about people and situations. **Listen to their instincts.**

GOOD PARENTING IS ASKING THE HARD QUESTIONS AND CARING